

1915

# Callexico

A L I F O R N I A



"King Cotton's  
Capital"







Imperial  
Valley  
breaks all  
records for  
earliest picking  
and ginning of cotton  
June 17, 1914.

# CALEXICO

## KING COTTON'S CAPITAL

By Allen Kelly

THERE are 1,400,000 acres of land that may be irrigated from the Colorado river, according to the latest report of Chief Engineer Rockwood of Imperial Irrigation District, in Imperial Valley and in Mexico. Of this great area, 700,000 acres are in Imperial Valley proper, 500,000 acres in the delta of the Colorado and 200,000 acres in Sonora, Mexico, below the Yuma Valley. The city of Calexico's location on the boundary line makes nearly a third of the American lands and all the Mexican lands commercially tributary to that city. The fact that only about 150,000 acres of this area of 900,000 acres have been de-

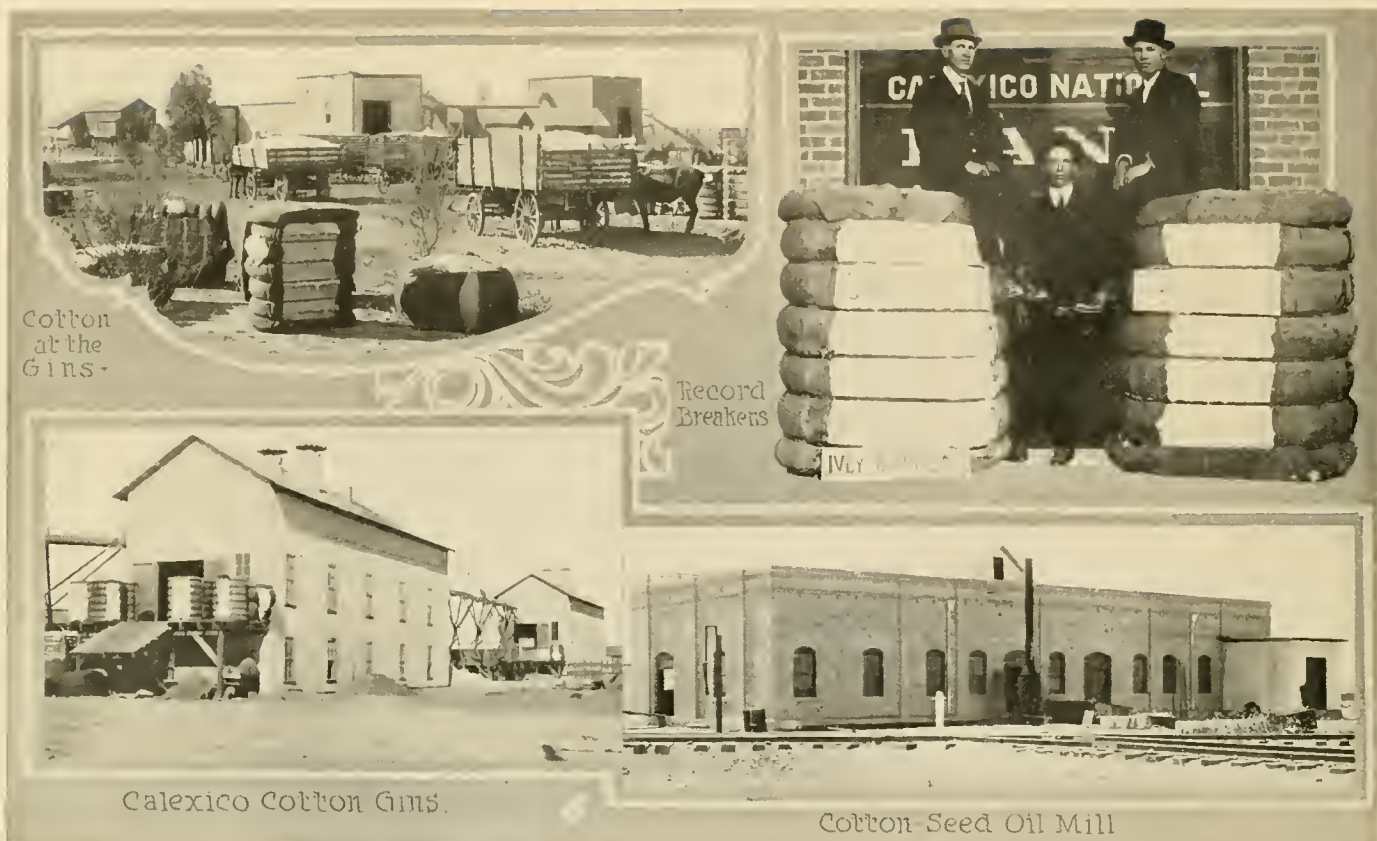
veloped and put under canal indicates that there are great opportunities for investment and enterprise and that Calexico's prospects for future growth are more than encouraging. Her commanding position as the commercial center of a vast agricultural region is assured beyond dispute, rivalry or competition. Having the only cotton compress in operation west of Texas, Calexico handles all the Mexican production of that staple. Fifty thousand acres on the Mexican side are cultivated in large tracts, producing cotton, grain and alfalfa. All the products of the Mexican section of Imperial Valley are distributed to markets through Calexico, the only port



Bales Ready  
for the  
Compress at  
King Cotton's  
Capital

A Cotton Yard at Calexico.





The Upper Right Hand Picture shows the earliest Bale of Cotton ever Ginned (June 17, 1914). The other bale was grown from the seed of the First Bale and Ginned Oct. 15th the same Year.

of entry of considerable importance on the international boundary between Nogales and the Pacific.

The commercial importance of Calexico is indicated by the volume of imports and exports, which, for the month of January, 1915, was nearly double that of the port of Los Angeles, and more than three times that of San Diego. The principal commodity imported through Calexico is cotton, and because of the large quantity of the staple grown below the line and upon American lands contiguous to the border city, Calexico is the cotton center of the Imperial Valley. In relation to means of transportation, Calexico occupies a position of peculiar advantage. It is the southern terminus of the Southern Pacific Imperial Valley branch, and the western terminus of the Inter-California, which runs through Mexico just below the border to Yuma and will be the route of Southern Pacific traffic because of the better grade than that of the old main line between Yuma and Imperial Junction. Rerouting of through trains has been postponed because of delay in ballasting and laying of standard rails caused by disturbances in Mexico. The San Diego & Arizona, now in course of construction, will connect Calexico with the Eastern through line. Eventually a railroad will be built through Lower California to the head of navigation on the Gulf of California, making the shortest and most direct route from the Panama Canal to California and the inter-mountain region, and the junction of such a line with American railroad systems must be at Calexico.

The determining factor in the original selection of the site of Calexico was its location in relation to the irrigation system, being at the head of the American canals, convenient to the point of control on the main supply canal, and a convenient trade and supply center for the settlers on the first lands to receive water. The headquarters of the California Development Co., controlling the system, were established and remain at Calexico.

The builders of Calexico seem to have understood from the first that the process of town-building in a region whose resources, attractions and possibilities of development are solely agricultural could not be forced beyond the natural

rate of growth without inviting reaction, disappointment and deflation of values. They promoted no artificial boom, made no effort to get so far ahead of the increase of farm population that the town would have to mark time and its business men take to swapping jack-knives while waiting for the country to catch up. Calexico has made no ventures in civic mushroom culture.

Calexico has not been lacking in enterprise or confidence, but the enthusiasm of its citizens has been tempered by intelligent conservatism, and they have not made the mistake, so common in the optimistic West, of plunging precipitately into expensive projects of improvement or over-ambitious expansions of business enterprises. The city has been built substantially and its advancement has been steadily along the line of rational provision for the needs of the future.

Doubtless this reasonable restraint of vaulting ambition, coupled with the peculiarly advantageous location of the city, explains in a measure the continuance of normal business conditions in Calexico during periods of general depression of trade and industry. It is a fact that the depression following the outbreak of war in Europe, which was felt sharply on the Pacific coast, had but slight effect on mercantile business or building operations in Calexico. Large investments of capital were made in cotton gins and oil mills after the trouble began and when the cotton market was at its lowest. The immunity of Calexico from "war scare" was noted and commented on quite generally by traveling commercial men and by bankers, who necessarily keep informed concerning condition in communities in which they have interests. Bank deposits and resources increased heavily during the year.

All of which leads to and confirms the conclusion that Calexico is not a city of the mirage—an illusion created by heated air—but is a substantial reality, reared upon a foundation of agricultural prosperity and commercial opportunity, built with sound judgment and sure foresight, neither out-running nor lagging behind the development of tributary territory, and having not only possibilities but the certainty of great advancement.

*Source: ...*  
J. B. ...



It is not to be disputed—and nowhere is there any disposition to question—that Calexico is to be one of the largest and most important of the several cities that must come into being in Imperial Valley as a result of the inevitable and great increase of rural population.

Calexico lies at sea level on the slope, imperceptible to the eye, that runs northward from the highest ground in the delta to the Salton sink. The mountain ranges that enclose Imperial Valley on three sides can be seen from Calexico, the nearest only twenty miles to the west and seeming to be much nearer. The city is 267 miles from Los Angeles by rail, about 140 miles from San Diego, and 61 miles from Yuma. The Colorado river is 40 miles east of Calexico in an air line, and its new course through the delta is about thirty miles to the south.

Mexicali, the present seat of government of the northern district of Baja California, having a garrison and population of between 3,000 and 4,000, adjoins Calexico on the south, the dividing line being marked by a ditch and a wire fence. Mexicali was the scene of much turbulence during the early days of the revolution, but is now orderly if not ostentatiously respectable. Tourists find it interesting to go across the line into Mexico, which is a safe and simple way of making a foreign tour.

#### Public Utilities and Improvements

Calexico is a city of the sixth class, incorporated, having a board of five trustees and the usual administrative and executive officers. It comprises 150 blocks, surveyed and improved, and its population in January, 1915, exceeded 3,000. Like many cities and towns of the irrigated regions in the Southwest, Calexico has public improvements and utilities far in advance of communities of the same size in the older states and of the frontier cities and great mining camps of the Wild West period. It has an efficient sewer system, with a total length of five and a half miles, built at a cost of \$37,000 and having capacity sufficient to meet requirements for many years to come.

Colorado River water for municipal and domestic use is taken from the main irrigation canal before it reaches the farming lands or any possible source of pollution. Settling basins remove the sand and heavy silt in suspension, and a sand filtration plant of a million gallons daily capacity takes off the fine silt and leaves the water clear and pure. Pump and tower give a pressure of 120 pounds at the fire hydrants on the street mains. The city is completely piped for domestic service. The rate of consumption is 15,000,000 gallons per month—about 125 gallons daily per capita—the minimum rate is one dollar a month, the supply is unlimited and the quality is excellent.

Electric light and power are supplied to Calexico, as to all the other valley towns, by a corporation, which also operates an ice factory and supplies the local demands of the valley.

Cement sidewalks and curbs have been laid at a cost of \$92,000, and the paving of nearly two miles of streets in the business district, at a cost of \$150,000, is in progress under the provisions of the Vrooman Act. Plans for grouping public buildings in a civic center have been made, and steps have been taken to acquire seven and a half acres for that purpose, the tract being in the heart of the city and adjoining the ten-acre high school site.

#### Schools and Churches

The first school established in Imperial Valley was at Calexico, the school house being a "ramada," or arbor covered with arrow weed. There are now two grammar schools and a union high school in the city. In January, 1915, the grammar schools had 450 pupils and 10 teachers, and the high school had 67 students and seven instructors. The Union High School district was created in 1910 by consolidation of the Bonita and Mount Signal districts with Calexico, and in 1913 three students were graduated. Students living in the outlying districts are carried free to and from school. The school year is 36 weeks. The curriculum includes ancient and modern languages, mathematics, the sciences, mu-



Calexico is Noted, Both as a Business and Residential City.





Calexico is the Center of More Than a Million Acres of Fertile Land.

sic, manual training, commercial law and various elective branches, and graduates are fitted for admission to colleges. A new high school building is in course of construction at a cost of \$65,000, and later a wing will be added, bringing the total cost up to \$80,000. The site is a ten acre tract in the heart of the city. Students have access to school, county and state libraries with a total of more than 200,000 volumes.

There are three church buildings in Calexico; Methodist, Congregationalist and Catholic, and all have sites in the residence district upon which larger buildings may be erected when needed.

#### Civic and Social

Two civic organizations are active in the conduct of public affairs in Calexico. The Woman's Improvement Club was organized in 1908 and has been an important factor in the progress of the city. The club maintains reading and rest rooms, library, and park, and has been diligent in promoting tree-planting and active in all civic and social work. It is making plans for the erection of a club house.

The Farmers' & Merchants' Club, composed of farmers, merchants, bankers and all classes of business and professional men, having a membership of 120, exercises the functions of a chamber of commerce or board of trade, maintains an office and a paid secretary, and is active and useful in public and business affairs.

Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Fraternal Brotherhood, Eastern Star and Reebecas have lodges, all of which are accommodated in a fine two-story Masonic Temple.

#### The Cotton Capital

Calexico, port of entry—duty free—for all cotton grown on the Mexican side, and commanding a large area of the best cotton land in the south part of the valley, has become headquarters of the cotton industry in Southern California. It is King Cotton's Imperial capital. Facilities for handling the crop consist of eight gins, a hydraulic compress (the only one operating in the Southwest) and two large oil mills. The gins and mills represent a capital investment of close to

\$500,000, half of which was made within the past year. The compress represents an investment of \$50,000. The capacity of the mills is 175 tons of seed crushed per day, and the compress can handle 1,000 bales of cotton a day, with storage capacity and adequate fire protection for 25,000 bales. The gins, mills and compress employ 375 men during the busy season.

During the season of 1914-15, the gins turned out 28,000 bales and the mills crushed approximately 14,000 tons of seed, producing 490,000 gallons of oil, 5,600 tons of meal, 5,600 tons of hulls and 700 tons of linters. The oil from seed grown in Imperial Valley is of the highest grade produced in the United States, commands a premium for its quality and is now selling (April, 1915) at 43 cents a gallon. That there is a near market for all the oil that can be produced is indicated by the importation through the port of Los Angeles of 450,000 gallons of inferior grade oil in the year 1914.

Cotton-seed meal and hulls have been found to be the best and most economical fattening food for cattle and other stock. A ration of 25 pounds of hulls and 5 pounds of meal daily adds 200 pounds to the weight of a steer in 90 days. During the past season, 6,000 head of cattle were fed in the Calexico feed yards and on one of the large ranches, and shipped to market. Only a third of the product of the mills was consumed in the valley.

An outside market for meal and hulls was developed in 1914 on the sheep ranges of Idaho, Washington and other states of the Northwest, and the larger part of the product was shipped to that market. It is claimed for cotton seed meal that it is the best winter feed for sheep, keeping them in good condition, saving the lambs and increasing the wool clip by a considerable percentage. Meal is now delivered in the Northwest at \$35 a ton; meal from Texas costing \$38.70 delivered at the same points.

Unrivalled alfalfa pasturage, great and increasing supply of the best fattening food and proximity to the rapidly expanding market of Southern California have commanded the attention of the big packing outfits, and it is certain that more large feed yards and packing houses will be added soon to Calexico's industrial establishment.



Foreign Commerce of Calexico

That the little border city of Calexico has more commerce with foreign countries than any other port of California south of San Francisco seems an amazing, if not incredible statement, yet it is confirmed by the official statistics for the first quarter of 1915. For the entire year 1914, Calexico was second only to Los Angeles in volume of foreign trade, leading San Diego in the proportion of three to one.

Calexico's foreign commerce is with Mexico only. In 1914, nearly four-fifths of all the imports from Mexico into Southern California came through Calexico, and nearly half the exports to that country. The principal imports are cotton, cattle, hides, and grain. The exports are food stuffs, wines and liquors, farm machinery, wagons and harness, mules, hardware, wearing apparel, oils and gasoline. A deputy collector and four inspectors of customs, and five officers of the Immigration Service are stationed at Calexico.

The following tabulation, showing the relative importance of the three principal ports of entry in the Southern District, is from the official reports of the Collector.

Calexico		
Year	Imports	Exports
1914	\$1,239,865	\$423,000
1915		
January	224,309	40,307
February	177,101	48,368
March	143,812	151,572
Total Quar.	\$545,222	\$240,207

Los Angeles		
Year	Imports	Exports
1914	\$3,247,000	\$1,183,117
1915		
January	119,803	20,372
February	115,995	44,718
March	166,375	87,149
Total Quar.	\$402,173	\$152,239

San Diego

Year	Imports	Exports
1914	\$ 464,554	\$ 88,850
1915		
January	70,790	11,399
February	23,739	306,257*
March	61,009	6,794
Total Quar.	\$155,538	\$424,450

\*Railroad construction outfit to South America and \$160,000 worth of ammunition to Mexico.

In addition to the imports noted, 114,000 bushels of barley and 3,700 bushels of wheat were brought from the Mexican side and placed in bond in Calexico. The imports of 1914 included 16,382 cattle and \$631,994 worth of cotton. During the first quarter of 1915, the imports of cotton amounted to 5-229,539 pounds.

Proofs of Progress

Assessed valuations and postoffice receipts are two sure indices of a town's rate of growth. The following statistics relating to the growth of Calexico indicate steady progress for several years and an acceleration of the rate during the "war" year.

Year	Postoffice Receipts	Assessed Valuation
1906	\$ 1,866.34	
1907	2,564.43	
1908	3,564.24	
1909	4,702.00	\$ 493,000
1910	5,129.31	715,400
1911	5,924.72	799,500
1912	6,188.44	856,485
1913	8,114.97	1,072,820
1914	11,672.51	1,959,072
1915 (3 months)	3,206.64	



View of Center of Calexico



Calexico Industrial Section.



Business Street in Calexico.



A Calexico Canal



Grammar School, Calexico.



A slight increase in postal receipts is all that remains to entitle Calexico to free mail delivery, all other requirements having been complied with, and there is no doubt that the city will have that service in 1915.

The bond debt of the city is \$80,000 and the tax rate is \$2 on the thousand.

#### Financial Situation

Bank figures show the same remarkable improvement in business and financial conditions during the period of supposed depression. The two national banks of Calexico, with a capital of \$100,000, had on the first of April, 1915, deposits aggregating \$800,000, resources of \$1,000,000 and surplus and undivided profits of \$50,000. Compared with the same period of the previous year, the deposits had increased \$125,000 and the resources \$300,000.

Building permits issued in 1914, covering only rough construction and taking no account of finishing work, amounted to \$442,493.

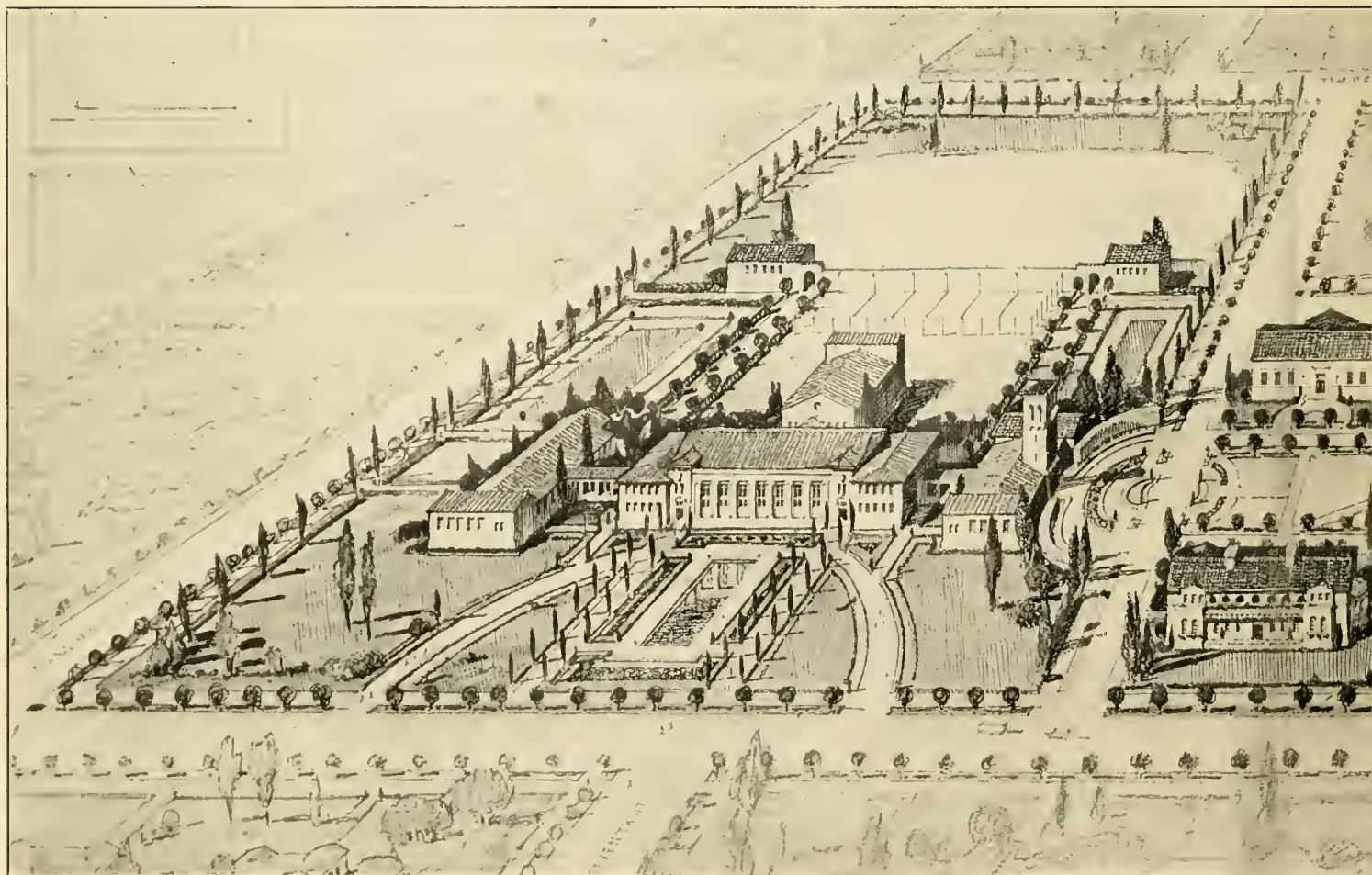
Calexico has several large general merchandise stores, dry-goods, tailor and jewelers' shops, groceries, drug stores, meat, vegetable and fruit markets, six hotels and numerous restaurants. There are two theatres, and a combined roof garden and open-air motion picture show on the top of one of the tallest buildings, which will be the most comfortable place in town on summer nights. No liquor is served or sold in Calexico.

Transportation facilities, in addition to the railroads mentioned, consist of connections with the state highway between the valley and San Diego, and the Southern National Highway that follows the border east of Calexico and passes through the sand hills to Yuma, daily auto stage service to San Diego and hourly stages to all points in the valley.

#### Recreation

Climatic conditions in Imperial Valley encourage the outdoor life and therefore are conducive to health. The air is dry and there are very few days in the year without sunshine. During eight months the weather is as nearly perfect as any reasonable being could desire, and during the other four it is undeniably hot, but the heat is not so oppressive as in other Californian valleys, where the humidity is high and cool night breezes are infrequent. Sunstroke and heat prostration are unknown. The climate of the south end of the valley and the Delta, moreover, is not at all the climate of the Salton sink and the sandhills, which constituted all of the desert of the Colorado known to railroad travellers a few years ago. The hottest summer day in Calexico is less uncomfortable than the average summer day in the San Joaquin Valley and is not to be compared at all with the sizzling and stewing nights that afflict the big cities of the East.

As a winter resort, Imperial Valley is unrivalled as to climate and opportunities for outdoor recreation and amusement. The vicinity of Calexico is peculiarly attractive to sportsmen. Millions of wildfowl, including geese and more than a dozen species of ducks congregate here in the winter, feeding on the barley fields and resting upon the waterways and lagoons of the delta. Quail, doves and rabbits are plentiful. In the jungles of the delta, the hunter may find deer, cougars, lynx, raccoons, foxes and beaver, and in the mountains of Lower California are many deer and Big-horn sheep. Laguna Salada, a lake 12 by 60 miles formed by overflow waters of the Colorado in a basin between the Cocopah and the main coast ranges, is only twenty miles from Calexico, and is a favorite resting place for canvasback, mallard and other large species of ducks.



PROPOSED CIVIC CENTER OF CALEXICO, SHOWING GROUPING OF BUILDINGS FOR MUNICIPAL, EDUCATION



### Opportunities

The most obvious opportunity for the safe and profitable investment of capital in Calexico is the building of houses for rent. There is not a vacant house or store in the city. The supply of good living quarters never has caught up with the demand. If 200 houses of five to seven rooms were to be built in 1915, every one could be rented as soon as completed. A company of "home builders" could operate profitably. Business and office buildings and an auditorium are needed, and a modern tourist hotel would not lack patronage.

Gas works, furnishings fuel gas for domestic use, and an independent local ice factory are urgent needs.

A cannery to take care of the great quantity of vegetables and fruit grown in the district would be profitable, and a meat packing house would increase the returns the district gets from the cattle, sheep and hogs raised and fattened here.

### Intensive Cultivation

In Calexico and its suburbs, especial attention has been given experimental horticulture and intensive cultivation. Expert fruit growers have been very successful with several varieties and a large pear orchard of thrifty trees is one of the notable successes. It has been demonstrated that a plot of ground the size of a city lot can be made to produce a considerable income from small fruits. From a lot containing less than an acre, more than \$300 worth of strawberries have been marketed in one season. A ten-acre tract near the city, devoted to the growing of vegetables and requiring the labor of only two men, has produced a gross annual revenue of \$4000.

The grapefruit, or pomelo, grown in the valley is of better

quality than that grown in the coast counties, and is ready for shipment at least a month earlier. The fruit is thin-skinned and there is so little of the "green persimmon" quality in it that it may be picked from the tree before it has turned color, and eaten as oranges are eaten. No sugar is required in preparation of an Imperial pomelo for the table.

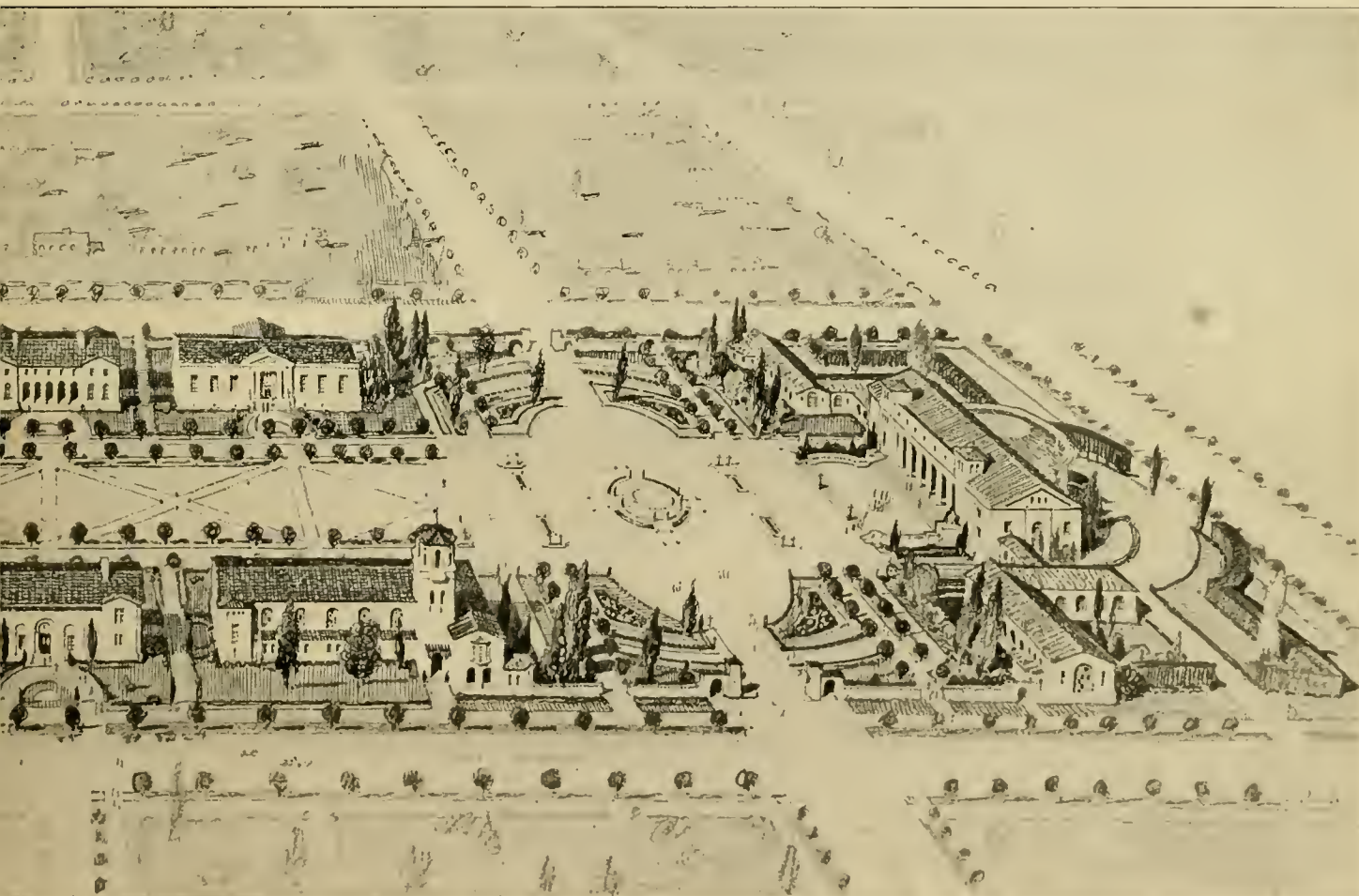
There is but a small acreage of pomelo trees in bearing, but many orchards, aggregating some hundreds of acres, have been planted near Calexico during the past year, and in the near future Imperial Valley grape fruit will be produced in shipping quantity, reaching market early and commanding a special price.

### Land Values

Building sites in the business district of Calexico are held at \$150 to \$200 per front foot. Residence lots, 50 x 140 feet, can be bought for \$300 to \$400, and in restricted sections for \$500 to \$600.

Farm land on the American side can be obtained in tracts from 5 to 1000 acres at \$100 to \$200 an acre, the higher price being that of highly improved small tracts close to the town. Farms of 80 to 160 acres, with water stock and under cultivation, may be bought at \$100 to \$150 an acre, according to location.

On the Mexican side there is very little land for sale, but land may be rented in tracts of from 100 to 10,000 acres at \$10 an acre per year. The soil in the Calexico region, on both sides of the line, is a sandy loam, free from alkali and other mineral salts, easily worked and very fertile. Ranches in this part of the valley have the important advantage of being at the head of the distributing canal system, which insures first delivery of water from the mains.



IGIOUS, SOCIAL AND OTHER PUBLIC USES. HIGH SCHOOL, AT LEFT, IS IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION



# IMPERIAL VALLEY

## The Delta of the Colorado

### An Inland Empire of Richness

By E. F. Howe

WE may believe that migratory families in a far age settled on the banks of the Tigris, Euphrates and Nile, built their irrigation canals, and in the course of some thousands of years formulated their concepts of civilization and consciously laid the foundation of empire.

And you may say the same thing of Imperial Valley, except that here the same methods and the same purposes have been quickened by modern knowledge and civilization and American zeal and initiative, for here the progress of millenniums has been condensed into fourteen years.

When this century opened there was not a fixed resident in what is now Imperial County. There were not fifty people in that area, and they but transient railroad employees.

Now the county has fifty thousand persons, ten towns ranging from 500 to 6,000 inhabitants each, it has one high school costing \$200,000, four others costing about \$65,000 each, fifty grammar schools, thirteen banks, five daily and five weekly newspapers, its property values reach seventy-five million dollars and the value of its products runs close to twenty millions.

Imperial is the leading county in the state in butter production and the leading county in the nation in the production of cantaloupes, turkeys and honey.

It ships sixty thousand head of fat cattle to market in

a year, two hundred thousand head of fat hogs and seventy-five thousand head of fat sheep.

It produces fifty thousand bales of cotton worth from \$50 to \$75 per bale and three-quarters of a million sacks of barley.

It produces asparagus and grapes for a month before other sections enter into competition, and half of the land in America adapted to date growing is in this valley.

That the men and women who have brought about this change from the most complete of deserts in fourteen years are proud of their accomplishment is not strange.

And yet much as has been done, they recognize, as all persons must, that Imperial Valley has not yet come into its own. So vast are the possibilities of achievement that what has been done is but a beginning.

In this valley there are 400,000 acres under irrigation in the United States, while in that part of the valley lying in Mexico there is an additional 100,000 acres irrigated. Eventually there will be 650,000 acres in the United States and 600,000 acres in Mexico in one compact body of irrigated land, with ample water in the Colorado river for the irrigation of the entire area.

Imperial County was created from the eastern half of San Diego County, and borders Arizona on the east and



Stock-  
feeding  
Yard  
Calexico

Thousands of Head of Cattle are Fattened on Cotton Seed Products at Calexico.





Water is King in the Imperial Valley.

Mexico on the south. It is as a strictly agricultural region that it is winning fame, and its fame rests not more on the fact of its vast proportions than on the rare climatic conditions that make it a true Egypt, plus American institutions.

The average land holding is 100 acres, with a constant tending to subdivision, with corresponding drift toward those lines of production which stand for the highest acreage revenue.

As already indicated, the institutions of civilization have been well established, there being, in order of population, the towns of El Centro (county seat), Brawley, Calexico, Imperial, Holtville, Calipatria, Seeley, Heber, Dixieland and Niland.

The county is connected with the outside world by the Southern Pacific railroad, having a branch line through the valley, and it will have further connection by the San Diego and Arizona railroad, now under construction. It also has a paved state highway well advanced in construction, connecting San Diego and El Centro, while special state appropriations have been made for a highway from Los Angeles to the valley and on to Yuma.

#### Irrigation Water Supply

The greatest river in all the Southwest is the Colorado, draining the territory west of the Rocky Mountains almost from Canada to Mexico, and carrying in the course of a year sixteen million acre feet, or enough water to irrigate five million acres if distributed according to needs throughout the year. And nature does do a good deal to adjust the river to the needs, for the heaviest flow is in the summer months, when most needed. Like the Nile, the flood of summer runs almost as true as the calendar, the crest passing Yuma, Arizona, year after year within a week of June 20th.

The water for Imperial Valley is diverted from the river just north of the international line, and to avoid a chain of hills it makes a long crescent sweep through Mexican territory and back into the United States.

The main water channel was originally owned by the California Development Company, but the people on the

American side of the line have organized the Imperial Irrigation District, under the laws of California and will acquire the main canal system in both countries.

There were organized originally a number of mutual water companies, now increased to thirteen, the farmers holding one share for each acre. These companies each contracted perpetually to purchase water from the parent company to meet the needs of their respective stockholders, each company covering a distinct area.

In acquiring the irrigation system, the district does not disturb the relationship of the mutual companies to the main supply system, but will give to the farmers the benefit of co-operation in the diversion as well as the distribution of the water, without profit.

In Mexico, the water is taken from the same main canal, but by the individual owners of the large tracts.

As the main canal sweeps through Mexico, it is tapped by a number of smaller canals, which lead to the districts of the respective companies, where it is further distributed to ditches known as laterals, and is thus led to the individual farms, delivery of water being made at the highest corner of each farm.

Approximately 380,000 acres are now under irrigation on the American side of the line, or a much larger area than is irrigated in all the other seven counties of Southern California combined.

The average cost of irrigation water throughout the valley is about \$3.50 an acre a year, this varying somewhat with the nature of the crop grown, the character of the soil and the care or negligence of the irrigator.

Aside from the value of the water for irrigation, it carries great values in plant food, and the fertilizer qualities of the water, at commercial rates, is estimated at fully twice the cost of the water service.

Since the people who use the water will hereafter have its management, it is certain that no pains will be spared to give amply from the abundance of water available and with the promptness that the best results in irrigation demand.



### Stage of Development

How far has development gone in Imperial Valley? This is a question that is often asked, for many persons wish to avoid too new a country, while others seek to be pioneers.

As stated, there will eventually be 650,000 acres of cultivated land on the American side of the line, of which probably 500,000 acres is now in personal ownership, while the remainder is withdrawn from settlement by the government and an uncertain period will elapse before it is restored to filing privilege. It is therefore impossible to secure land otherwise than by purchase.

The pioneer period has brought people from every state in the Union and from almost every foreign country, and of necessity there has grown up with the cosmopolitan population all degrees of success.

The practical farmer who personally directs his farm is making big profits from the perpetual output of the soil, but the impractical man who invests in land for a speculation and leaves it to the first applicant who appears without regard to his knowledge of farming, sobriety or industry, often fails, just as the same methods would bring failure anywhere in any business.

The valley can therefore be said to be in a state of evolution, in which the indolent or impractical or intemperate are being eliminated, while in their places are coming other staid and industrious citizens, and the personnel of the valley is improving from year to year.

Meanwhile there is a steady tendency to subdivide the larger holdings, and many farms of from twenty to eighty acres are being created out of larger holdings on the American side. This implies a steady transformation from barley and cotton fields to alfalfa, dairy cattle, hogs, gardening and fruit growing.

On the Mexican side of the line the situation is entirely different. There are a few great holdings of land, and this is mainly farmed under lease, sometimes in fields each of thousands of acres. It is there not a question of home making, but of profits from big acreage, and consequently cotton has taken possession of practically the entire irrigated

area. Further down the peninsula there are great valleys in which large droves of cattle are pastured.

### Climatic Conditions

The day will come when the ideal climate of Imperial Valley will make this region one of the most famous of pleasure and health resorts.

When the reader has caught his breath we will proceed. It is a common practice to speak of this valley as a natural hot house, but that expression refers to June, July, August and September, just as one might speak of Chicago as having Arctic climate—during the winter.

There is this difference. During the unpleasant cold period of the north, nature is dormant, but during the unpleasant hot months here nature is as productive as during the other eight months. There is no stagnant period in the year, while for eight months no land on earth can excel this for delightful weather.

As for health, any climate in which people instinctively live out of doors is a healthy climate, and they do that here. Even when indoors, the windows and doors are ever open, and almost all people sleep throughout the year on screen porches.

And the summers are just as healthful as the winters, though even the natives do not recommend the summer months for pleasure. The weather then is hot. The worst days are not so bad as the worst days in New York or Chicago. There is no feeling of suffocation here—no gasping for breath. The sense of heat is external, not internal. The average person drinks about three gallons of water a day, and that comes through the pores continuously. It flushes out the body and cures many a chronic ailment. The rapid evaporation of the moisture tends to cool the body, and prevents fever heat.

During the summer the typical day begins with mercury at 70 at sunrise and it rises steadily to 105 in the afternoon, then steadily declines. There may be two or three days in the summer when it will reach 112. During the four months there probably will not be a day when mercury fails to reach 95.



Imperial Valley Country Road

Imperial Valley has Hundreds of Miles of Splendid Roads.



## Imperial Valley

## Flooding Newly Planted Alfalfa Field



Turning the Desert into the Garden of Eden.

But these figures are deceiving, although correct. The sensible temperature, or the temperature under evaporation, is heat as one feels it. In humid air there is but five or ten degrees difference between sensible and dry-bulb temperature, while here, in summer, there is a difference of from thirty to thirty-five degrees. That is why 105 degree temperature here feels like 80 degree temperature in other places.

#### The Dairy Industry

Until Imperial Valley began its rapid advance in the dairy industry, Humboldt and Stanislaus counties led in California, each of those counties now having butter production somewhat over five million pounds a year. But Imperial Valley has taken the lead, having production of 7,400,000 pounds of butter a year, valued at \$2,500,000. It is the only big butter producing county in the southern half of the State.

The chief market for this product is Los Angeles and neighboring cities, and for the first time in history Southern California has become somewhat near self-supporting in butter consumption.

Yet the butter production of this valley continues to increase at from 25 to 35 per cent a year, and the possibilities of the industry run far ahead of the present achievement.

The fact is that the prospects are good for the valley shipping to the northward and eastward in time a great portion of its output, for the Chicago market is enough advanced over that of Los Angeles much of the time to cover the cost of transportation.

No where else can butter be produced so cheaply as here. For twelve months in the year there is the finest of pasturage. The open-air life is as healthful for cattle as for man, there being practically no losses, while the grains and by-products of the cotton oil mills provide cheaply the perfection of balanced rations for butter production.

The monthly "cream checks" falling into the hands of the dairymen from the many creameries of the valley furnish a steady flow of money that has added immeasurably to the great prosperity of the county, and this prosperity is shared

by Calexico and all the other towns of the valley.

There is a constant tendency to improve the standing of the milch cow herds, and many a thoroughbred, purchased at high cost, has been brought from distant states, and this upbreeding is adding to the profit of those interested in the industry.

#### Fruit Possibilities

It is probably better to speak of horticulture and viniculture as of the future than of the present, for although there has been much demonstrated, the present production is so small relative to the possibilities, that the big development lies mainly ahead.

California is already famous for its citrus, deciduous and adeciduous horticulture and for viniculture. Taking a place in all these lines, and a peculiar place, Imperial Valley has added palmacious fruit—the date—to the list.

It seems probable, too, that this would be a fine lime producing section.

In deciduous fruits the best monetary returns per tree are probably from pears, the trees seemingly adapting themselves well to this climate and soil, little influenced by the variations of irrigation, and producing well. The apricot tree more sensitive to irrigation, but when properly cared for produce generously, and the fruit ripens early in June, being the first in the markets, and consequently commanding a good price.

Some varieties of early peaches do finely.

The fig finds its natural home here, and like the thrifty voter, is to be found "early and often." Many varieties of both white and purple figs have been successfully grown.

The olive is alone in the adeciduous class, and is making a record for productiveness which is not surpassed in any other region, though the acreage is yet small.

The grape is destined to be one of the great products of the valley, though under peculiar conditions that impose problems. Those problems are in part now solved. Early plantings were mainly of the varieties made familiar by other sections of California, but of those varieties the Malaga alone proved of value. This fine grape ripens about July



10th, a month earlier than in other sections of the state. The Purple Damascus is another magnificent grape that ripens at about the same period. It is unfortunate, however, that about mid-July there is frequently a light rain, which is sufficient to ruin the crop. A solution of this difficulty is being found in the production of two or more varieties of Persian grapes, notably those known as No. 21 and No. 23. Natives of a country with a climate similar to this valley, these excellent grapes are finely adapted to this section, and they have the advantage of ripening about July 1, and yielding their main crop before the arrival of the mid-summer rain.

Being able to place excellent table grapes on the markets more than a month before they come from any other American vineyards, it becomes an almost mathematical certainty that this eventually will be one of the great industries of the region.

The date, in the belief of many persons, eventually will be to this valley what the orange is to Riverside, the raisin to Fresno and the prune to San Jose. And it will be as superior to the ordinary date of commerce as the navel orange is to the seedling.

There are countless varieties of dates to be found in North Africa and Arabia, but they can be divided into two main groups, the thick and the thin skinned fruit.

Only the thick skinned fruits can stand the crude packing and transportation methods followed in the countries where they are grown, and it is that class of fruit, embracing a good many varieties, which reaches this country under the commercial names of Fard and Golden dates.

But the delicate, thin-skinned dates, almost worshipped in Africa and Arabia, are practically unknown in American markets. It is fruit of this class which Imperial and Coachella valleys is now making famous. In fact, this fruit is more like dainty confection than fruit, and the American has no difficulty in providing containers in which it can be marketed without sustaining injury.

There is no disposition to spin fancy yarns from Imperial Valley cotton. It does that for itself. And one must deal gently with this subject, for if the straight truth were abruptly told persons familiar with the industry elsewhere

might doubt its accuracy, while a partial statement might itself convey a meaning that would not do justice to the subject.

As yet the greatest cotton production is of the short staple, but the medium long staple is an active competitor for public favor.

On the Peter Barnes land lease in Mexico this year there was ginned a little more than 10,000 bales of cotton from 6500 acres, or a trifle over a bale and a half per acre. There are individual growers on smaller tracts who have grown more than two bales of 500 pounds each to the acre. Taking 10 cents as the average price, two bales would give a gross return of \$100 per acre, to which there would be added, in the average year, \$15 for a ton of seed.

Taking the same maximum production of Durango cotton, at 15 cents, the gross returns would be \$150 an acre, plus \$15 for seed.

If this is to be taken as the best production by the man who is master of the industry, the reader will wish to know the result with the average man who knows how to grow cotton, and the Peter Barnes lease (referred to above), is probably a fair case, that being two-thirds of the maximum given.

As the industry has been expanding rapidly, it has drawn in some men who did not know the business, and a few made complete failures.

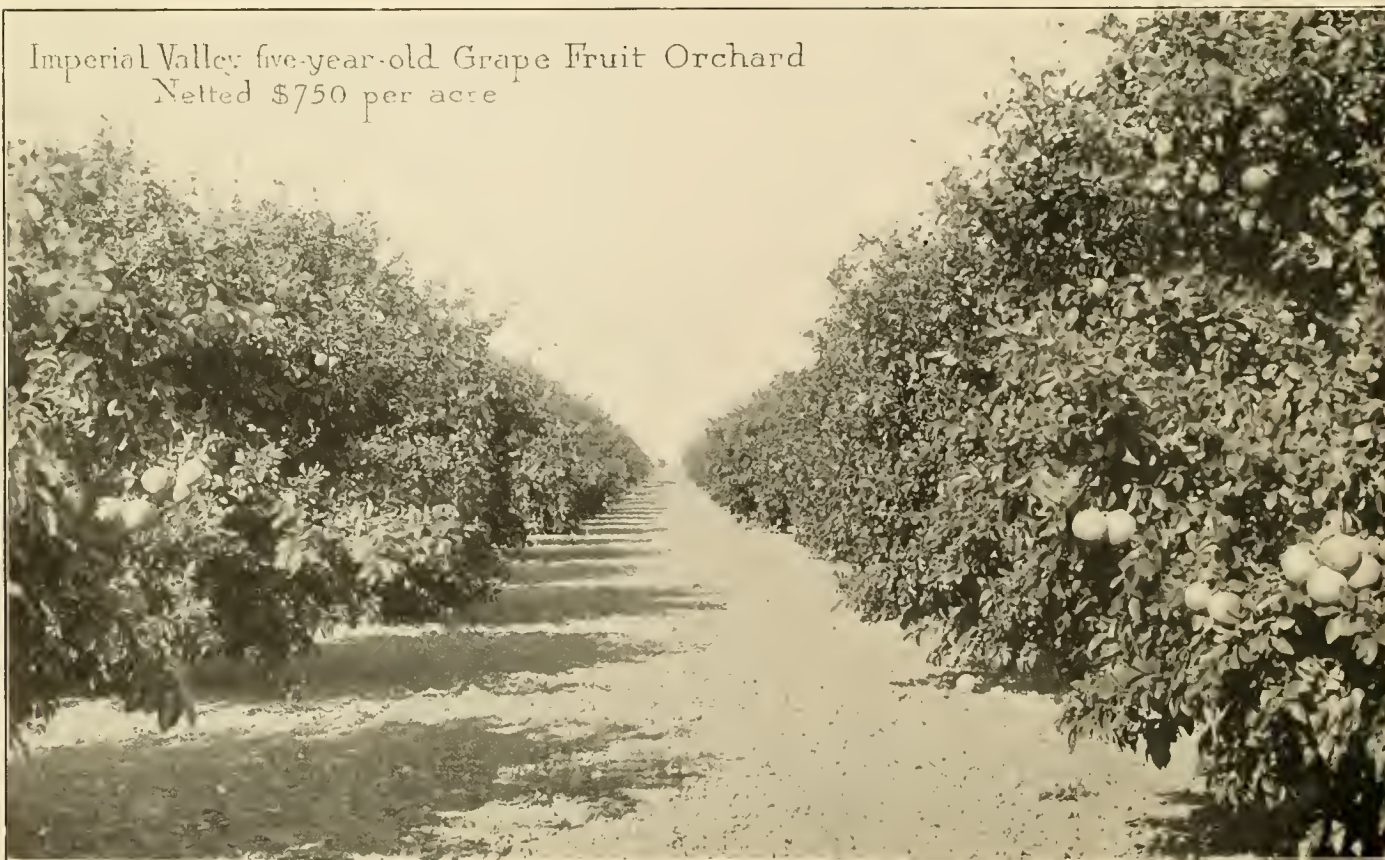
The 600,000 acres in Mexico which before many years will all be under irrigation, can be said to have a productive capacity of about a million bales a year, worth fifty million dollars, with seven and a half millions added for seed.

As Durango cotton may yet gain the mastery, its possible productive value can be estimated at seventy-five million dollars.

It might be thought that the labor question in the cotton fields would be difficult to solve, but this is not the case. On the Mexican side of the line are many Chinese laborers, not allowed to come into the United States, and these, with Mexicans and negroes, meet all the requirements at very moderate wages.

As cotton has become the leading factor in making the city of Calexico, it is well to begin a review of the agricultur-

Imperial Valley five-year-old Grape Fruit Orchard  
Netted \$750 per acre





## CALEXICO



Three Trainloads of Fat Cattle are Shipped from Imperial Valley each Week.

al calendar with this staple. It is in March and April that the old plants are cut down to within six inches of the ground and the irrigation water turned on. This "volunteers" the next crop from the stumps of the old, and this "volunteered" crop is ready for first picking in September. For the new acreage the planting season is in March, April and May, and picking begins in October. There is no rush to harvest the crop, as there are no rains to damage it, and picking of cotton is continuous from September 1st to March 15th, or throughout more than half of the year. This long picking season in great part solves the labor problem.

The calendar year opens with barley fields being pastured, and after the fields have been eaten down two or three times, the grain is allowed to mature, and harvest continues through May and June.

The first cutting of alfalfa is in March and eight or nine cuttings are made, the last in November, this crop growing but slightly during the winter months.

The asparagus shipping season begins in March, when numerous carloads are sent to eastern cities.

In May and June from 4000 to 5000 carloads of cantaloupes are shipped from valley points to eastern markets.

Fat cattle, hogs and sheep are shipped heavily throughout the year.

The valley produces more than seven million pounds of butter a year, and that is shipped daily.

The big harvest of Egyptian corn is in September and October, this being in greatest part fed in the valley, as are the cotton seed husks and meal, by-products in the making of oil.

The heaviest grape shipments are during the first half of July—a month earlier than from any other American district.

Apricots and figs ripen in June, the former having a brief period, but the fig trees continuing to produce crops through the summer.

Dates (and the finest on earth) ripen in October and November.

Garden vegetables can be produced in any month in the year.

The tendency here, as in most parts of California, is for the farmer to specialize on one product, diversity of production on the individual farm being the exception.

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


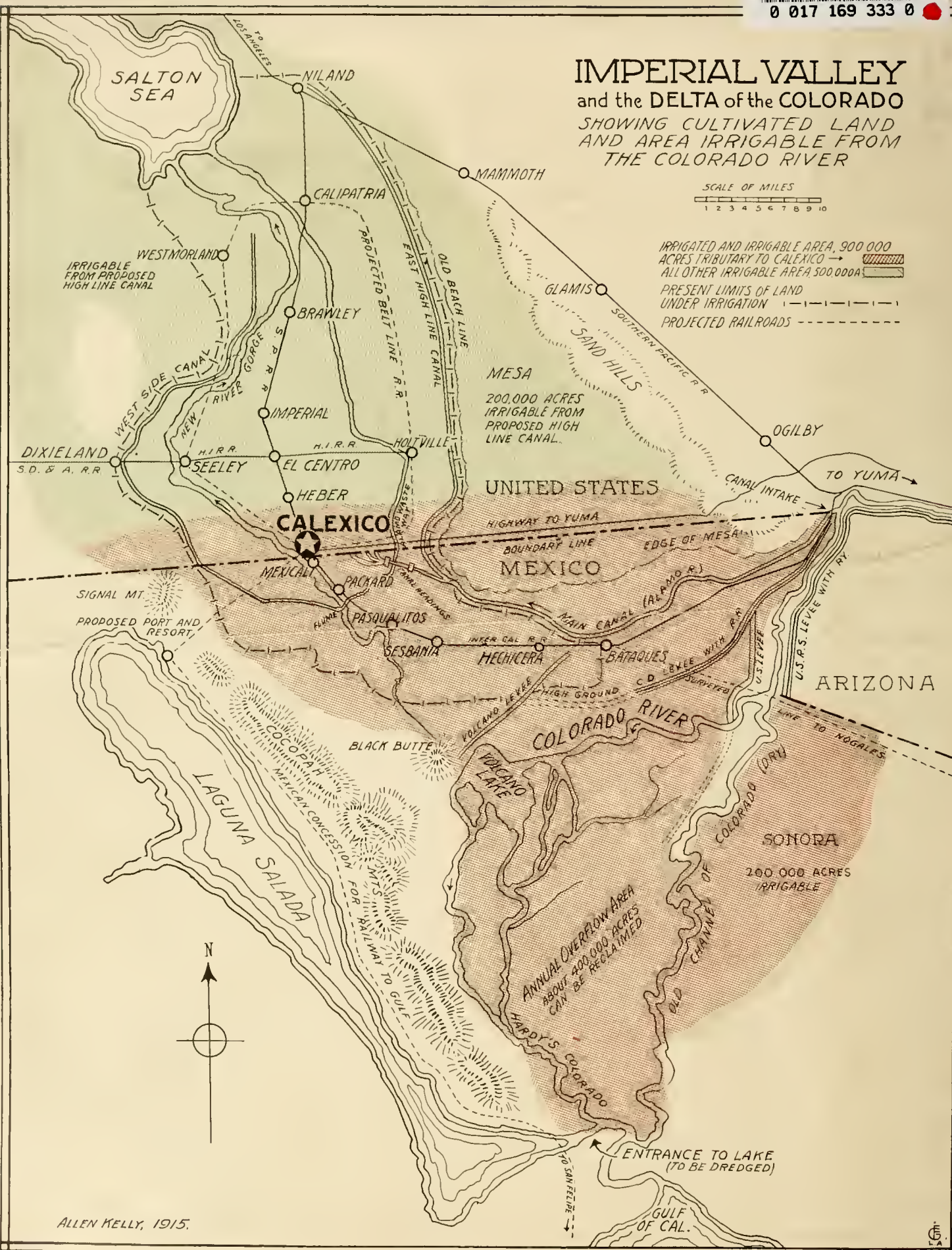


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# IMPERIAL VALLEY and the DELTA of the COLORADO SHOWING CULTIVATED LAND AND AREA IRRIGABLE FROM THE COLORADO RIVER

SCALE OF MILES  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IRRIGATED AND IRRIGABLE AREA, 900 000  
ACRES TRIBUTARY TO CALEXICO →   
ALL OTHER IRRIGABLE AREA, 500,000A   
PRESENT LIMITS OF LAND  
UNDER IRRIGATION - - - - -  
PROJECTED RAILROADS - - - - -



ALLEN KELLY, 1915.